

SEATTLE PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY BOARD
Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2010 (6-8 p.m.)
City Hall, Boards and Commission Room

1. Call to order and introductions

SPAB members in attendance: Christina Bollo (Chair), Betty T. Arens, Tom Williams, Jeniffer Calleja, Greg Brey (Get Engaged), Jon Morgan, Seth Schromen-Wawrin, Kristen Lohse (Vice Chair), Ben Smith

Brian Dougherty, SDOT

Absent: Mark Landreneau, Mark Bandy

Presenters: Sam Woods, Barbara Gray, Kristen Simpson (SDOT)

Guests: Jacob Struiksma, Jody Connolly (SBAB) Devor Barton, Scott Champion

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of the Minutes

Tom made a motion to approve the October minutes, the motion was seconded by Betty, all approved. Tom made another motion to approve the November minutes, the motion was seconded by Seth, all approved.

4. Pedestrian Master Plan Implementation, 2011 Work Plan Elements (Barbara Gray & Kristen Simpson, SDOT)

Barbara started by saying that the PMP workplan will go to council for endorsement at the end of January.

She said that she is working on revising the PMP objectives matrix to list projects and cross reference the PMP objectives for review by the SPAB, tonight she will cover the top 10 deliverables.

1. Walkable Zone Major Deliverables

The walkable zone is a 6' x 8' box that must be kept clear from obstructions. There is lots of interdepartmental cross-reference work to be done to further this policy work. SDOT is developing design guidelines and guidance for the public, but more work remains to be done. There is also an educational component to this work.

Christina and Jacob urged SDOT to work with the post office and the postmaster to better locate larger post office boxes on sidewalks.

2. ROWIM Design Guidance Updates

The Right of Way Improvement Manual addresses city-wide standards and specifications, and is undergoing a major update. Relevant sections include utilities, street improvements, landscaping. Some of the specific elements to be addressed: trees, porous concrete, green stormwater infrastructure, curb ramps, alternative sidewalks (i.e. asphalt). After completion and final review, it is due to be adopted in

the 2nd quarter of 2011. The previous ROWIM design guidance update was not robust enough, so some topics need to be revisited, such as policies addressing curb radii at street corners, pole placement and consolidation of light standards by City Light, and sidewalk vault finishes – ensuring non-skid surfaces.

3. Land Use Code Changes

SDOT is working on advancing land use code changes for topics including sidewalk repair, fee in lieu of program for sidewalks and code language to encourage through block connections and division of large parcels as part of new development activities.

4. Encouragement and Education Programs

SDOT is trying to better coordinate TDM (transportation demand management) programs. They've had good experience working with the Metropolitan Improvement District regarding the McGraw Square Streetcar Plaza, and look forward to working with other business improvement districts.

Barbara reported on a \$1 million HUD grant for a predesign study for the better pedestrian connection between North Seattle Community College (NSCC) and Northgate Link Stations over I-5 at 100th. Stakeholders include NSCC, WSDOT, City of Seattle, and King County. In addition to the physical crossing, land use changes would be included.

5. Center City Projects

For these projects the City acts as reviewers for proposed projects and as developers. McGraw Square Streetcar Plaza will be complete in February, other upcoming projects include Bell Street Park, to be constructed in 2011; a green alley network project; the Center City Framework Plan, and the King Street Station Hub.

6. Pedestrian Lighting Plan

7. Policy and Plan Development and Implementation

Projects in this topic include festival streets, accessible pedestrian signals, and work with Transportation Choices Coalition on the statewide complete streets policy. Urban design-related projects include neighborhood plan updates, a project on Beacon Avenue, the Thomas Street green street, and the Lake to Bay Loop.

8. Sustainable Community Program

There is a multi-departmental team working on this program. Projects include a street-side rain garden on 28th Ave NE in Ballard in 2011; coordinating infrastructure planning; a Walk Bike Ride pilot project on place making; neighborhood transit hubs – making transit-friendly centers using street furnishings and other ways to activate sidewalk space.

9. Deliver the PMP Infrastructure Programs

Barbara will return in January to talk about the work plan, with specific deliverable actions and infrastructure projects.

10. Evaluation and Performance Monitoring

SDOT is working on a 2010 annual report, AKA as “indicators dashboard portal,” and an evaluation of the holiday safety campaign.

Jon asked about the effort to monitor and map sidewalk closures during construction. Barbara reported that there was a stakeholder group involved with the program, that a proposal was taken to council for their review and approval and that the construction mapping tool is being updated. The proposal includes revisions to the fee structure level, factoring in the costs of closing sidewalks vs. closing travel lanes.

In conclusion, she noted that there is a nationwide pedestrian and bike data collection effort that the City is participating in. Beginning January, data will be collected quarterly, starting with the areas Jan Gehl's office identified. Census data will also be available beginning in March; PMP updates will be based on these two types of data.

Barbara asked if this new format was helpful and the group agreed that it was. In April she will return to the group to talk about funding tools, including Walk Bike Ride (\$6 mil. over 2 years); a transportation benefit district (TBD), probably sooner than expected, and Capital Improvement Projects prioritization.

5. Rechannelization Project (Sam Woods, SDOT)

Seattle has completed 29 "road diets" since 1972. Five were completed in 2010, a larger than normal number.

The City adopted Complete Streets checklist for capital projects in 2007, and rechannalization projects respond to the need to plan and design for all modes.

Rechannalization projects are identified through the Bicycle Master Plan, Pedestrian Master Plan and community requests.

The factors for determining rechannalization candidates:

- ADT (average daily trips, by cars) of 25,000 or less, ideally under 20,000 trips
- Collision history – that approximately 1/3 of collisions result in injury
- Traffic speeds, number of lanes (usually 4)
- Travel times

Upcoming projects include South Othello (funded by the Large Neighborhood Street Fund) and South Jackson – 12th to 1st Avenue. In 2011, NE 125th and Airport Way from Corson to 13th.

SPAB members asked about 35th Ave SW in West Seattle and Rainier Avenue. Sam responded that due to high traffic volume and transit on these roads, they are not ideal candidates for rechannalization, but that the need for changes to enhance safety is recognized.

Recent rechannalization projects were discussed: Nickerson Road, which was planned for over 3 years, and where crossing safety was a big factor and Greenwood Avenue, which was requested by the neighborhood and has been considered a success.

Though bike lanes are often incorporated into rechannalization projects, SDOT has striped bike lanes in many prime locations, so bike lane creation is not as a big a factor in the justification of rechannalization projects.

Regarding impacts to transit, Sam reported that transit stops are often consolidated, and inline stops are created so overall transit reliability is enhanced.

The City does monitor impacts post installation, including the following:

- Cut-through traffic
- Increased sight distance
- Vehicle volume and speeds
- Signals analysis, LOS (level of service) at intersections
- Parallel arterial travel times
- Bike/ped volumes
- Yielding rates, which are of great interest to many, especial pedestrian advocates.

Upcoming repaving projects that will incorporate rechannelization include Dexter Ave, Ellis, and Airport Way. 23rd will be repaved in 2015 from Jackson to Madison, and the segment from Yesler to Rainier will be studied. Ravenna Boulevard will be repaved in 20103, and could include a cycle track or a buffered bike lane.

Seth asked about converting sharrows to bike lanes through road diets.

Jon asked how SDOT could reframe the discussion about rechannelization to avoid the bike vs. car polarization that has characterized some of the last rechannelization projects.

Meeting adjourned at 8 p.m.